



HECO

Ascada 300 BTX

"MIRACLE IN BLUE"



Highlight

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With the Ascada 300 BTX, Heco, the audio specialist based in the Rhine region, has produced a wireless loudspeaker that is able to receive music from smartphones, tablet PCs and computers and doesn't need to be hooked up with cables to do so. AV-Magazin invited the compact sound solution to submit to an examination that would put its qualities to the test.

Modern methods of managing digital media demand products that are able to adapt to the special requirements that compatible technologies make. Heco's response has been named the Ascada 300 BTX. This compact box with its burly proportions combines several functions in a single product. Besides the loudspeakers, users will, for instance, find a stereo amplifier and digital sound processor within its high-gloss casing. The mini system will also receive audio signals that have been sent wirelessly by Bluetooth. Which means that smartphones, tablet PCs and computers can easily transmit music, film scores and audio books to it. The Bluetooth wireless protocol has been standardised across brands and systems and so mobile and stationary end devices may send music to the Ascada box irrespective of the operating system being used. The only requirement is that a Bluetooth function exists. Heco's wireless loudspeaker is available either in black or white and costs just on 400 euros. In the test report below, AV-Magazin will be finding out how well this practical method of spreading music works and how good the sound is in actual practice.

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Switching on and operation

The clearly written operating instructions make installing the 300 BTX easy and quick. Once it has been unpacked and set up, the loudspeaker is able to receive signals in one of two ways. The first is the Bluetooth function already described above. The smartphone, tablet PC or computer first needs to pair up with Heco system before the connection can be established. All users have to do to connect is press the pairing button on the remote control for three seconds. A blue diode concealed in the baffle will then start flashing. The Bluetooth function subsequently just needs to be activated and "300BTX" selected as the player on the respective mobile end device. And that's it! The loudspeaker can then be used to output the sound. Thus allowing songs from users' personal music collections as well as from on-line streaming services to be played back

over the loudspeaker. Besides the wireless connection, the loudspeaker also comes with an analogue audio input, which is located on the back of the casing. It has been realised in the shape of a 3.5 millimetre mini socket and may be used to connect televisions, game consoles and TV receivers. Something that deserves praise is the fact that the loudspeaker comes with required adapter cable already included. The USB port next to this socket is particularly practical. It allows batteries in power-hungry smartphones and tablet PCs to be charged. With a maximum charging current of 2.1 amps, there's even sufficient power to charge two mobile end devices via an optional USB hub.

The volume is controlled remotely from the computer, smartphone or tablet PC. But the loudspeaker also comes with a handy remote control for selecting the audio source, sound mode and operating mode. This ergonomically shaped hand-held device allows the above settings to be made if, for example, a TV has been connected to the 300 BTX by cable.

Technology

The audio signals are effectively converted by a stereophonic three-way system, which includes three tweeters, three mid-range units and a woofer. The latter measures 13 centimetres and has been positioned centrally in the baffle. The bass chassis operates with a sturdy cone that is joined to the chassis basket by an inversely shaped rubber surround. The 13-cm chassis works with reflex volume to improve the bass response. The ventilation that this requires is ensured by a tube that has been fitted into the bottom section of the BTX 300 so that it faces downwards. The two mid-range units are 92 millimetres large and are equipped with a paper cone that enables them to operate at frequencies ranging between around 180 and 3,800 Hertz. The sound conversion in the short-wave sector is handled by a 20 millimetre textile dome.

A strong digital power amplifier has been used for powerful signal amplification and can generate up to 160 watts for short periods. Thanks to the built-in digital sound processor, the 300 BTX is able to offer four pre-set sound modes that may be selected via the handy remote control. Linear mode is complemented here by the rock, ambience and vocal modes. The Heco system is compatible with the

Bluetooth 4.0 standard and uses this protocol to transmit audio signals wirelessly. The music files will even be transmitted in CD quality if the computer, smartphone or tablet PC supports the aptX function.

Sound quality

After just the first few minutes of listening to Heco's Ascada 300 BTX system, its surprisingly powerful and mature sound had already convinced us. Thanks to high-quality technology, the wireless loudspeaker produces an incredibly dynamic and finely detailed sound. When we played Ketevan, the new album by Katie Melua, the small wireless box pleased us with its velvety-soft reproduction of the voice that was characterised by a finely dynamic quality in all ranges. The 300 BTX's handling of the lower frequency ranges also absolutely satisfied our demands. Gladys Knight's big soul sound, for instance, was rendered with a really beautiful melt and volume. And pop and rock really got the wireless system going when it needed to. It's then that bass drums sounded enormously powerful and punchy. Thanks to the two tweeters let into the baffle from the outside, Heco's system also delivered a first-class performance in regard to spatial acoustics and offset in depth. The stereo panorama is pleasantly broad and possesses no fuzziness at all. All in all, Heco has, with the 300 BTX, presented a powerful sounding wireless loudspeaker whose harmonious tonal coordination makes it suitable for all applications and styles of music.

Clear text

Heco's Ascada 300 BTX wireless loudspeaker is – thanks to the first-class quality of sound and attractive design – perfect for delivering sound in studies, kitchens and conservatories. In living rooms also, this powerful wireless loudspeaker is able to effectively improve the poor sound of modern flat-screen TVs and thus constitutes a contemporary version of a compact hi-fi solution. And with its wireless delivery of music from smartphones, tablet PCs and computers, it also represents a flexible way of enjoying music.

